Tao produces all things; its Virtue nourishes them; its Nature gives them form; its Force perfects them. —*Tao Te King*

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THE LINES OF GROWTH

AS, with each passing year, man's inhumanity to man becomes more plainly than ever the great issue of the century, one sees with complete clarity the reason for H. P. Blavatsky's forthright emphasis on the First Object of the Theosophical Movement. Occult doctrines, explanatory metaphysics, teachings concerning the principles and the long cycles of human evolution would all be to no purpose, were the objective of Brotherhood to be given a subordinate role.

Yet all these teachings, placed in their supporting position, become the means for understanding the intricacies of human development, and for a far deeper conception of world fraternity than those based upon political utopianism or other schemes of general reform. The Brotherhood of which the Theosophical literature speaks is a consummation which can be expected to come about only after those subtle infrastructures of self-knowledge have had time to grow, as a result of the efforts of men in the world to form that nucleus of brotherly energies to which the First Object refers.

Study and work were the watchwords established for Theosophic effort by William Q. Judge. One may think that the reason for this direction lay in the need for men in the world to fill their minds with liberating conceptions which, if kept vital and growing, would protect against the lapses into sectarianism that first weaken and then destroy the great, historic movements for reform and regeneration. Even while H.P.B. was on the scene, these weaknesses

became clearly manifest. One may imagine the anguish she suffered at the failure of the Society to sustain itself as a vehicle for the ennobling, altruistic teachings which she had recorded. And we know, at last, from the words assembled in the article, "She Being Dead Yet Speaketh," how difficult it must have been for such a one as H.P.B. simply to maintain *contact* with a world of men so much under the sway of short-term organizational objectives, and so little informed as to the true processes of human growth.

There could be in such a being as H.P.B. no false optimism. She worked, she said, for the future. And only one able to read the possibilities of that future, and to know that, beneath the endless compromises and shallow claims of "progress" which characterized Western civilization, there stirred a yearning that would one day confirm and further her work, could have carried on without discouragement against the odds she faced.

She made no promises hinting at the instant enlightenment of mankind. But she did speak of those processes of cyclic evolution that would eventually bring into play perceptive faculties long hidden beneath the opacities of material development. She spoke, in *The Secret Doctrine,* of changes to come in the psycho-spiritual atmosphere, and of the heightened pulse of a more conscious egoity than was dreamed of in her time. And in the *Five Messages to the American Theosophists,* she balanced the promise of a more immediate future, in terms of awakening powers of mind, with the corresponding vulnerabilities that would be their inescapable accompaniment.

The rule of study and work still applies. The unfolding destiny of the cycles is still the ground of conviction and the source of hope. And lest the shadows of the present, whose gloom may bespeak no more than the mortality of the past, should discourage us, we are still able to turn to the closing pages of *The Key to Theosophy* to find words of high hope and fulfillment. This is a vision of a world with a changed polarity, for which the hidden lines of force must have been forming at least since 1875.

THE LESSONS OF KARMA

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

THE idea most usually attached to the word Karma is, a power, inherent in the nature of things—by action of which good deeds are rewarded with happiness, while evil deeds bring suffering and pain. According to this view, Karma becomes a sort of moral police, continually adjusting and correcting the errors and extravagances of the human race, and vigilantly providing that none shall trespass on the domain of another.

Karma has been described as an application of the Law of Action and Re-action to the mental forces, and its spirit has been summed up in the words: "Whatsoever a man soweth, the same shall he also reap." And all this is undoubtedly true; and these ideas, when displacing the belief that occurrences are merely accidental and fortuitous, are of the highest importance; but though true in itself, this idea falls far short of the whole truth, for when examined scientifically it is found to be aimless; the continual action of this compensatory law, its perpetual adjusting and correcting, is mere temporising, it goes nowhither. It is nothing more than the endless swinging to-and-fro of an isolated pendulum. The pendulum is merely mechanical, and, when detached is unnatural; for all nature has a purpose, and moves ever onward. Nature is organic; much more so is supernature.

If the limited view of Karma be compared to a pendulum, its true action might be represented by a tree;[1] and its rewards and punishments may be compared to leaves, produced in spring only to fall in autumn and again produced the next spring, only again to fall. But the tree is better than it was a year ago; the pendulum merely does its work to undo it again; but not so the tree. It has added something

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NOTE.—This article from the *Path* for February, 1888, is now printed in THEOSOPHY for the first time.

[1] The symbol of the Tree is an ancient Aryan one. They said the Tree grew head downward, its roots above.—[Ed., *Path*]

to itself by every effort, it has assimilated to itself an enlarged territory won from the inorganic world.

The force within and behind the tree works forward, and for definite ends, and this fact makes the tree a fitting emblem of the law of Karma.

Observation of life teaches us that beyond the mere rewarding, or compensatory action of pain and pleasure, they have another use; this deeper use is for discipline—development. In the light of subsequent insight, events which at the time seemed quite insignificant and objectless appear in their true light as teachers, and the lesson which they have taught—and for which and no other the learner was ripe, becomes evident.

By what appears at the time mere chance, one may meet a certain person, or group of people; conversation on various subjects may take place; various views may be expressed, various feelings manifested; the necessary nourishment which the learner's growth demands may be received quite unnoticed; and years after, a sudden necessity or circumstance may reveal the purpose of that meeting, and may turn a beam of light on the grain of gold unconsciously received. This is true of all events, but chiefly of persons, the greatest of events.

Persons are the great teachers, the greatest revealers in the lesson of life; we may learn through another what our single sight might never have perceived.

Amongst the lessons to be learned from persons, perhaps the most important are those to be drawn from Sex.

Nature has grouped all human beings into two great classes—sexes; each being complementary to the other, and this being true especially on the mental plane. Every peculiarity of each sex, each feature which differentiates it most notably from the other, is a further perfection of this complementary character, an additional attraction to bind the two sexes together in mutual harmony.

And when the highest perfection of this mutual harmony is attained, in complete good understanding and perfect sympathy, what lesson is learned?

The more perfect the sympathy—in its best sense, of sharing another's life, and penetrating it with filaments of love—the more clearly this truth is established: that, far deeper than any difference between the sexes, lies a radical unity and identity; though masquer-

ading under very different appearances, the soul of man and the soul of woman are the same, the same in the laws which govern their life, in their nature, and in their divinity.

It would seem that Life, the great teacher, having brought the evolving souls to vivid individual consciousness, and despairing of ever teaching them sympathy, of ever illumining for them the inner spiritual nature of each other and revealing to them their identity, had organized this charade of the sexes, had invented these masks of man and woman, male and female.

Besides this perception of identity, there is another lesson taught, another object subserved, by the complementary nature of the sexes. A poor cramped egotist enters the arena of life; all things seem to look bitterly upon him; a cloak of perpetual misery seems thrown over him; he seems tied and bound with iron bonds, so that in the presence of others he can never even be *himself;* he feels frost-bitten and crushed, and he knows that if by some miracle he could drink a deep draught of elixir and burst his bonds, he could at last walk upright—a man among men.

He is an egotist, an unfortunate, not sufficiently developed to learn the great lesson of sympathy, and this through no taint of evil, but because the stream of life is half congealed within him, awaiting some miracle, some angel to stir the waters into life. By and by the miracle happens; the great teacher brings him face to face with another soul, qualified in all things to supplement his deficiencies. At once he feels an infusion of supernal power. In the presence of this elect one, he feels thrilled with warm waves of celestial vigour; a part of the infinite promise of life is realised, one of the prophecies of spirit is fulfilled in joy. At last the poor egotist can burst his bonds; he tastes the divine sweetness of sympathy with another soul; he learns that threads of gold bind soul to soul, that soul traverses soul with ethereal arteries conveying to each the life of the other in addition to its own. And he learns also one sublime lesson—the divinity of renunciation. Through giving he receives; through self-sacrifice he inherits his kingdom.

And the lesson by no means ends here, in sympathy with a single soul—great and notable benefit though that be. Gaining such large good from one, he learns to credit others with the same excellence; his faith extends in an ever widening circle, till at last he embraces all humanity in holy bonds of love.

If harmony teaches great lessons, great also are the lessons to be learned from discord.

All strife produces pain; as great pain to the oppressor as to the oppressed—perhaps greater. Seek to tyrannize over another, and not only does that other rise against you, but within you rises a truer self, and takes the part of the oppressed. My every tyranny against my brother is at once punished by this truer self, with a corresponding weight of fear.

At last I learn the lesson, that one cannot be harmed without the harm reacting on the other, on all; that the well-being of one is inseparable from the well-being of all. I throw down my arms, and make amends by generous dealing. At once my brother's attitude changes, from enemy he becomes friend. He has been waiting for this opportunity to acknowledge me as brother; and once again the great teacher teaches the lesson of sympathy. Henceforth my brother's life is a part of my life, and the power we command belongs to both.

And thus the most ordinary events, and even our own errors, are turned to benefits. A firm hand, a power that sits above us, and whose secret we cannot command, guides our evil to wider good, and turns our erring energies into right channels.

Every event in life teaches its lesson, consciously or unconsciously, to us. If we are dull learners it may have to be repeated twice or many times; if we aid the teaching by ready perception, it may be taught but once, and then we can pass on to grander problems and higher themes.

Since every event thus bears for us a secret and spiritual value, and we cannot guess beforehand the nature of that value, is it not futile in us officiously to take on ourselves the direction of the lessons, with a grand assumption of omniscience; saying "To such a life I shall devote myself; such and such things shall I perform; and from such and such I shall abstain"; like an unskilled pilot without chart or compass, steering in the dark to an unknown land.

Were it not better to drop this pretence of wisdom which we cannot make good; boldly to face events as they meet us, and with good courage and resolution to dare and endure all things, so only that the golden lesson hidden in the events be not lost?

It has been hinted that those who seek wisdom should abandon all their present occupations and live the life of a desert ascetic; and

some have even thought to draw down on themselves the gifts of divinity by a mere mechanical walking away from their duties; but not thus is life's secret to be surprised, by turning the back on our appointed duties, and more important still on the lessons they contain for us.

The books on wisdom are written in cypher; the true ascetic is he who, without abandoning his duties, renounces all selfish aims, and leaving behind his animal nature, takes refuge in the secret place of his soul.

Much more than this is allegorical, concealing a spiritual nature within it; perhaps, amongst others, the saying that earth's greatest sages dwell on her loftiest mountains is an allegorical picture of the truth that the divinest souls are those who have raised themselves furthest from earthly things to the peaks of purity, forever embosomed in the serene azure of spirit, for all things in the physical world have thus their inner vital meanings; though doubtless, were we to search earth's loftiest summits we would come face to face with the stately forms of holy sages, for as the spiritual fact is complete so also must the earthly picture of it be complete.

Life, the great Teacher, has thus designed his lessons. For those whose sight is gross, the teaching is framed in physical pictures, in faces, in trees, in mountains, and in the broad bosom of earth; but those whose sight is finer perceive within each of these a deeper and truer fact, for which alone these have their being.

These externals, forests and hills, the restless ocean, the everlasting stars, are ever eloquent sermons hymning the divinity of spirit. The life of the world says, with the *Erd-Geist* in *Faust*—

> Thus at the roaring Loom of Time I ply,
> And weave for God *the garment thou see'st him by.*

The great teacher brings to us person after person, event after event; from each, as we are able, we learn its lesson; from each, as we are able, we wrest its secret, a value unknown and inscrutable until we are face to face with it.

Though at first the lesson may be bitter and unwelcome, we learn at last that what seemed bitter was in reality most sweet, and that what seemed hurtful was pregnant with healing; in our highest moods we are one with the teacher and perceive his ends; in our moments of deepest insight, we perceive that the teacher is our true self; and though we may writhe under subsequent sharp les-

sons, we are willing to endure; certain that the suffering is for our ultimate benefit.

These considerations teach no indolent and idle acquiescence in the tide of events; our duty and advantage is to throw ourselves on the side of the teacher and to check all perverse tendencies which else would thwart and neutralise the lesson. Let those who esteem this an easy task, try it conscientiously for a single day.

Since all events and persons have thus an interior and unapparent value, since all are intimately related to our development and lasting good, we infer that this truth holds for others also; and we are thus able to perceive dimly the mighty power and beneficent directing energy which lies behind life, turning the good and evil of each to the welfare of all. Let us therefore cast ourselves on Truth and work out our divine destiny without fear; this is the truest good for ourselves, and as surely is it the truest good for all others.

By working out our own divine destiny we gain the power of well doing, for he alone who has access to the heart of good can do good to his neighbor. Such laws as these teach us a noble carelessness of petty ends and events, and forbid forever all sordid taking thought for the morrow.

Perceiving the swing of these grand laws, we can boldly take in hand the game of life, with a heart for every fate. And so we find the first and last word of Karma to be discipline—development. But discipline to what end? Is it for the great prizes of earthly life? to glorify our three score years and ten?

Far otherwise is the tendency of these mighty laws; they lead not to wealth so often as to poverty, not to praise and fame so often as to contempt and obloquy, not so often to the throne as to the scaffold.

And thus—unless we are bemocked by a lifelong illusion, unless we are the fools of a never-ending nightmare—we have, in the sweep and tendency of these majestic laws, an intimation of our higher destiny and a sure certificate of our immortal good.

Then first shalt thou know,
That in the wild turmoil,
Horsed on the Proteus,
Thou ridest to power,
And to endurance.

—CHARLES JOHNSTON, F.T.S.

letters • questions • comment

Primitive people, as well as men of antiquity, found no difficulty in accepting a pantheistic view of the universe; and the philosophy of Theosophy embraces this theory. But in general, twentieth-century Western man has no interest in such an idea. Why have these differing attitudes toward the manifested world developed, and is there any chance that an enlightened pantheism may again become integral in Western thought?

Though it is true that ancient and primitive people, and Theosophists, may be labeled "pantheists," this is not to say that their approach to nature is identical. The term pantheism, introduced by John Toland in 1705, was so broadly defined by him that it covers many divergent systems. He gave its essential tenets as: "All things in the world are one. What's all in all things is God." Thus, when the inadequacy of phenomena to express God's nature and the *oneness* of God are stressed, God becomes the only reality and all externalized nature a mere illusion. When, on the other hand, the self-sufficiency of the natural world is emphasized, pantheism may become practically indistinguishable from simple naturalism. The varying formulations of the concept, therefore, caused H. P. Blavatsky, early in *The Secret Doctrine* (p. 6), to write: "It is hoped that during the perusal of this work the erroneous ideas of the public with regard to Pantheism will be modified." She then briefly reviewed some of the different formulations and established the position of Occultism. One concept, however, is basic to pantheism: that the manifested world is the microcosm of the macrocosm.

Primeval man, the "spiritual" man of the Third Race, we are told, *knew* himself to be one with Deity and nature—his spiritual sight had not yet dimmed; the bond was sure and clear. Echoing this awareness, those people whom we call "primitive" feel a kinship with nature, a sort of family relationship—often expressed in terms of younger and elder brother. All primitive people, of course, are keenly aware of the interdependence of all forms of life. Often, too, when the less developed "younger brother" is sacrificed for the

use of man, there is a ritual expression of gratitude and thankfulness for the sacrifice. This feeling of interdependence was sensitively expressed by Miss Analis Obowaswin, a Canadian, in comparing Indian and white cultures (THEOSOPHY 54:346):

> Indians were never in business. But they were sensitive traders. They traded with each other and they traded with environment . . . with the sun and the sky, with the earth and the sea and the forest. For everything they took they gave back something of themselves in energy, in prayer, in gratitude.

Further, these people *learn* from the lower kingdoms, and their folklore is full of examples of the awareness of the non-human world and of the fact that useful knowledge can be gained from the younger lives in their immediate environment. There is also an instinctive sense of the "spirit" within all forms, an intuitive perception of the importance of the unseen.

"Civilized man," on the other hand (as Mr. Judge says), "is cut off from the immense and real field of experience which lies within the visible and tangible worlds." He is cut off because, says H.P.B., "the law of evolution is now carrying us along the ascending arc of *our* cycle"—the cycle of intellectual development.

In the Western world, the break with nature was largely due to accepting the biblical account of creation literally. When God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth . . ." man took this for permission to exploit the lower forms of life for his personal enjoyment or aggrandizement. By God's fiat, man attained a special status, one he had not earned but had fallen heir to by having been presented with a completed world. H.P.B. says (*S.D.* I, 412) that when man conceived of a "one *living* personal god," an anthropomorphic Satan became a logical necessity, and that this was "the first Karmic effect of abandoning a philosophical and logical Pantheism." Nor did the later antagonistic doctrine of a mechanistic universe in which man had battled his way upward through animal forms to the top of the ladder of evolution do anything to bridge the gap. Instead, it increased his arrogance toward, and alienation from, nature and the "primitive" races.

Yet, throughout history there is evidence of a persisting strain of pantheistic thought—an innate prescience not to be denied. It

probably reaches its profoundest expression in the *Upanishads*. Taoism also tends toward pantheism, and in neo-Confucianism it is predominant. The Greeks, too, had their own expressions of pantheistic thought. The Stoics, even though materialists, had a pantheist side, since they regarded the material universe as governed by the divine indwelling reason. Indeed, there has been a sporadic resurgence of pantheism in the West whenever any individual rebelled against the idea of an extra-cosmic, anthropomorphic God. As early as the Middle Ages, Johannes Scotus Erigena and Johannes Eckhart and the Mohammedan Averroes wrote in pantheistic vein; during the Renaissance, Spinoza, "the greatest of modern pantheists," found God to be the immanent principle of the Universe, manifesting in an infinite multiplicity of modes; and in our own technological age, pantheistic thought is represented by Alfred North Whitehead.

So we see that while it is true that "in *general* twentieth-century Western man has no interest in such an idea," there have always been those in whom this intuition was kept alive. Even now, we find scientists denying a mechanistic universe and speaking of a "living, breathing, cosmos"—discovering by telescope and microscope that man, nature, and universe are one. These are straws in the wind pointing toward the fulfillment of H.P.B.'s prediction (*S.D.* I, 533) that "Pantheism *may* be physically *rediscovered.*" And the following passage certainly seems to suggest an eventual renascence of pantheism in Western thought:

> There *is* a predestination in the geological life of our globe as in the history, past and future, of races and nations. This is closely connected with what we call *Karma* and Western Pantheists, "Nemesis" and "Cycles." The law of evolution is now carrying us along the ascending arc of *our* cycle, *when the effects will be once more re-merged into,* and re-become the (now neutralized) causes, and all things affected by the former will have regained their original harmony. This will be the cycle of our special "Round," a moment in the duration of the great cycle, or the *Mahayuga.* (*The Secret Doctrine* I, 641.)

THE WISDOM RELIGION

Gnosticism I

THE real and hidden sense of this doctrine was known to all the initiates. The Tanaïm imparted it to their elect ones, Isarim, in the solemn solitudes of crypts and deserted places. It was one of the most esoteric and jealously guarded, for human nature was the same then as it is now, and the sacerdotal caste as confident as now in the supremacy of its knowledge, and ambitious of ascendency over the weaker masses; with the difference perhaps that its hierophants could prove the legitimacy of their claims and the plausibility of their doctrines, whereas now, *believers* must be content with blind faith.

While the kabalists called this mysterious and rare occurrence of the union of spirit with the mortal charge entrusted to its care, the "descent of the Angel Gabriel" (the latter being a kind of generic name for it), the *Messenger of Life,* and the angel Metatron; and while the Nazarenes termed the same Abel-Zivo, the *Delegatus* sent by the Lord of Celsitude, it was universally known as the "Anointed Spirit."

Thus it is the acceptation of this doctrine which caused the Gnostics to maintain that Jesus was a man overshadowed by the Christos or Messenger of Life, and that his despairing cry from the cross "Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani," was wrung from him at the instant when he felt that this inspiring Presence had finally abandoned him, for—as some affirmed—his faith *had* also abandoned him when on the cross.

The early Nazarenes, who must be numbered among the Gnostic sects, believing that Jesus was a prophet, held, nevertheless, in relation to him the same doctrine of the divine "overshadowing," of certain "men of God," sent for the salvation of nations, and to recall them to the path of righteousness. "The Divine mind is eternal," says the *Codex Nazaræus,* "And it is pure light, and poured out through splendid *and immense space* (pleroma). It is Genetrix of the Æons.

Note.—This series began in the November, 1966, issue. Source of this section: *Isis Unveiled* II, 154-59.

But one of them went to matter (chaos) stirring up confused (turbulentos) movements; and by a certain portion of *heavenly* light fashioned it, properly constituted for use and appearance, but the beginning of every evil. The Demiurg (of matter) claimed divine honor. Therefore Christus ("the anointed"), the prince of the Æons (powers), was sent (expeditus), who *taking on the person* of a most devout Jew, Iesu, *was to conquer him;* but who having *laid it* (the body) *aside,* departed on high." We will explain further on the full significance of the name Christos and its mystic meaning.

And now we will endeavor to define, as briefly as possible, the dogmas in which, with very trifling differences, nearly all the Gnostic sects believed. It is in Ephesus that flourished in those days the greatest college, wherein the abstruse Oriental speculations and the Platonic philosophy were taught in conjunction. It was a focus of the universal "secret" doctrines; the weird laboratory whence, fashioned in elegant Grecian phraseology, sprang the quintessence of Buddhistic, Zoroastrian, and Chaldean philosophy. Artemis, the gigantic concrete symbol of theosophico-pantheistic abstractions, the great mother Multimamma, androgyne and patroness of the "Ephesian writings," was conquered by Paul; but although the zealous converts of the apostles pretended to burn all their books on "curious arts," enough of these remained for them to study when their first zeal had cooled off. It is from Ephesus that spread nearly all the *Gnosis* which antagonized so fiercely with the Irenæan dogmas; and still it was Ephesus, with her numerous collateral branches of the great college of the Essenes, which proved to be the hot-bed of all the kabalistic speculations brought by the Tanaïm from the captivity. "In Ephesus," says Matter, "the notions of the Jewish-Egyptian school, and the semi-Persian speculations of the kabalists had then recently come to swell the vast conflux of Grecian and Asiatic doctrines, so there is no wonder that teachers should have sprung up there who strove to combine the religion newly preached by the apostle with the ideas there so long established."

Had not the Christians burdened themselves with the *Revelations* of a little nation, and accepted the Jehovah of Moses, the Gnostic ideas would never have been termed *heresies;* once relieved of their dogmatic exaggerations the world would have had a religious system based on pure Platonic philosophy.

Now let us see what are the greatest *heresies* of the Gnostics. We will select Basilides as the standard for our comparisons for all the

founders of other Gnostic sects group round him, like a cluster of stars borrowing light from their sun.

Basilides maintained that he had had all his doctrines from the Apostle Matthew, and from Peter through Glaucus, the disciple of the latter. According to Eusebius, he published twenty-four volumes of *Interpretations upon the Gospels,*[2] all of which were burned, a fact which makes us suppose that they contained more truthful matter than the school of Irenæus was prepared to deny. He asserted that the unknown, eternal, and uncreated Father having first brought forth *Nous,* or Mind, the latter emanated from itself—the *Logos.* The Logos (the Word of John) emanated in its turn *Phronesis,* or the Intelligences (Divine-human spirits). From Phronesis sprung *Sophia,* or feminine wisdom, and *Dynamis*—strength. These were the personified attributes of the Mysterious godhead, the Gnostic quinternion, typifying the five spiritual, but intelligible substances, personal virtues or beings external to the unknown godhead. This is preëminently a kabalistic idea. It is still more Buddhistic. The earliest system of the Buddhistic philosophy—which preceded by far Gautama-Buddha—is based upon the uncreated substance of the "Unknown," the A'di Buddha.[3] This eternal, infinite Monad possesses, as proper to his own essence, five acts of wisdom. From these it, by five separate acts of Dhyân, emitted five Dhyani Buddhas; these, like A'di Buddha, are quiescent in their system (passive). Neither A'di, nor either of the five Dhyani Buddhas, were ever incarnated, but seven of their emanations became Avatars, *i.e.*, were incarnated on this earth.

Describing the Basilidean system, Irenæus, quoting the Gnostics,

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[2] The gospels interpreted by Basilides were not our present gospels, which, as it is proved by the greatest authorities, were not in his days in existence.

[3] The five make mystically ten. They are androgynes. "Having divided his body in two parts, the Supreme Wisdom became male and female" (*Manu*, book i., sloka 32.) There are many early Buddhistic ideas to be found in Brahmanism.

The prevalent idea that the last of the Buddhas, Gautama, is the ninth incarnation of Vishnu, or the *ninth* Avatar, is disclaimed partially by the Brahmans, and wholly rejected by the learned Buddhist theologians. The latter insist that the worship of Buddha possesses a far higher claim to antiquity than any of the Brahmanical deities of the *Vedas*, which they call secular literature. The Brahmans, they show, came from other countries, and established their heresy on the already accepted popular *deities*. They conquered the land by the sword, and succeeded in burying truth, by building a theology of their own on the ruins of the more ancient one of Buddha, which had prevailed for ages. They admit the divinity and spiritual existence of some of the Vedantic gods; but as in the case of the Christian angel-hierarchy they believe that all these deities are greatly subordinate, even to the incarnated Buddhas. They do not even acknowledge the creation of the physical universe. Spiritually and *invisibly* it has

declares as follows:

"When the uncreated, *unnamed* Father saw the corruption of mankind, he sent his first-born *Nous,* into the world, in the form of Christ, for the redemption of all who believe in him, out of the power of those who fabricated the world (the Demiurgos, and his six sons, the planetary genii). He appeared amongst men as the man, Jesus, and wrought miracles. This Christ did *not die* in person, but Simon the Cyrenian suffered in his stead, *to whom he lent his bodily form;* for the Divine Power, the Nous of the Eternal Father, *is not corporeal,* and *cannot die.* Whoso, therefore, maintains that Christ has died, is still the bondsman of ignorance; whoso denies the same, he is free, and hath understood the purpose of the Father."

So far, and taken in its abstract sense, we do not see anything blasphemous in this system. It may be a *heresy* against the theology of Irenæus and Tertullian,[4] but there is certainly nothing sacrilegious against the religious idea itself, and it will seem to every impartial thinker far more consistent with divine reverence than the anthropomorphism of actual Christianity. The Gnostics were called by the orthodox Christians, *Docetæ,* or Illusionists, for believing that Christ did not, nor could, suffer death actually—in physical body. The later Brahmanical books contain, likewise, much that is repugnant to the reverential feeling and idea of the Divinity; and as well as the Gnostics, the Brahmans explain such legends as may shock the divine dignity of the Spiritual beings called gods by attributing them to *Maya* or illusion.

A people brought up and nurtured for countless ages among all the psychological phenomena of which the civilized (!) nations read, but reject as incredible and worthless, cannot well expect to have its religious system even understood—let alone appreciated. The profoundest and most transcendental speculations of the ancient

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existed from all eternity, and thus it was made merely visible to the human senses. When it first appeared it was called forth from the realm of the invisible into the visible by the impulse of A'di Buddha—the "Essence." They reckon twenty-two such visible appearances of the universe governed by Buddhas, and as many destructions of it, by fire and water in regular successions. After the last destruction by the flood, at the end of the precedent cycle—(the exact calculation, embracing several millions of years, is a secret cycle) the world, during the present age of the Kali Yug—Maha Bhadda Calpa—has been ruled successively by four Buddhas, the last of whom was Gautama, the "Holy One." The fifth, Maitree-Buddha, is yet to come. This latter is the expected kabalistic King Messiah, the Messenger of Light, and Sosiosh, the Persian Saviour, who will come on a *white* horse. It is also the Christian Second Advent.

[4] Tertullian reversed the table himself by rejecting, later in life, the doctrines for which he fought with such an acerbity and by becoming a Montanist.

metaphysicians of India and other countries, are all based on that great Buddhistic and Brahmanical principle underlying the whole of their religious metaphysics—*illusion* of the senses. Everything that is finite is illusion, all that which is eternal and infinite is reality. Form, color, that which we hear and feel, or see with our mortal eyes, exists only so far as it can be conveyed to each of us through our senses. The universe for a man born blind does not exist in either form or color, but it exists in its *privation* (in the Aristotelean sense), and is a reality for the spiritual senses of the blind man. We all live under the powerful dominion of phantasy. Alone the highest and invisible *originals* emanated from the thought of the Unknown are real and permanent beings, forms, and ideas; on earth, we see but their reflections; more or less correct, and ever dependent on the physical and mental organization of the person who beholds them.

Ages untold before our era, the Hindu Mystic Kapila, who is considered by many scientists as a skeptic, because they judge him with their habitual superficiality, magnificently expressed this idea in the following terms:

"Man (physical man) counts for so little, that hardly anything can demonstrate to him his proper existence and that of nature. Perhaps, that which we regard as the universe, and the divers beings which seem to compose it, have nothing real, and are but the product of continued illusion—*maya*—of our senses."

And the modern Schopenhauer, repeating this philosophical idea, 10,000 years old now, says: "Nature is non-existent, *per se*. . . . Nature is the infinite illusion of our senses." Kant, Schelling, and other metaphysicians have said the same, and their school maintains the idea. The objects of sense being ever delusive and fluctuating, cannot be a reality. Spirit alone is unchangeable, hence—alone is no illusion. This is pure Buddhist doctrine. The religion of the *Gnosis* (knowledge), the most evident offshoot of Buddhism, was utterly based on this metaphysical tenet. Christos suffered *spiritually* for us, and far more acutely than did the illusionary Jesus while his body was being tortured on the Cross.

In the ideas of the Christians, Christ is but another name for Jesus. The philosophy of the Gnostics, the initiates, and hierophants understood it otherwise. The word Christos, like all Greek words, must be sought in its philological origin—the Sanscrit. In

this latter language *Kris* means sacred,[5] and the Hindu deity was named Chris-na (the pure or the sacred) from that. On the other hand, the Greek *Christos* bears several meanings, as anointed (pure oil, *chrism*) and others. In all languages, though the synonym of the word means pure or sacred essence, it is the first emanation of the invisible Godhead, manifesting itself tangibly in spirit. The Greek Logos, the Hebrew Messiah, the Latin Verbum, and the Hindu Viradj (the son) are identically the same; they represent an idea of collective entities—of flames detached from the one eternal centre of light.

"The man who accomplishes pious but interested acts (with the sole object of his salvation) may reach the ranks of the *devas* (saints);[6] but he who accomplishes, disinterestedly, the same pious acts, finds himself ridden forever of the five elements" (of matter). "Perceiving the Supreme Soul in all beings and all beings in the Supreme Soul, in offering his own soul in sacrifice, he identifies himself with the Being who shines in his own splendor" (*Manu*, book xii, slokas 90, 91).

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[5] In his debate with Jacolliot upon the right spelling of the Hindu Christna, Mr. Textor de Ravisi, an ultramontane Catholic, tries to prove that the name of Christna ought to be written Krishna, for, as the latter means black, and the statues of this deity are generally black, the word is derived from the color. We refer the reader to Jacolliot's answer in his recent work, *Christna et le Christ*, for the conclusive evidence that the name is not derived from the color.

[6] There is no equivalent for the word "miracle," in the Christian sense, among the Brahmans or Buddhists. The only correct translation would be *meipo*, a wonder, something remarkable; but not a violation of natural law. The "saints" only produce *meipo*.

The Eternal Now

Short is the reach of their thinking who suppose that what before was not comes into being, or that anything perishes and is utterly destroyed. For it is inconceivable that anything should arise from that which in no way exists, and it is impossible, and a thing unheard of, that what exists should perish, for it will always be wherever one in every case puts it.

—Empedocles

FROM MEN TO GODS

BEFORE incarnating on this globe millions of years ago, mankind lived, according to the teachings of Theosophy, in other spheres as hierarchies of spiritual beings—*Manasa Putra*—we might even call them gods. At that distant time there was no sense or feeling of either personality or egotism. The feeling of individuality was the characteristic of the respective hierarchies, not of the units. No unit of the "host" was conscious of any distinct feeling of separateness such as men have on earth. But with the so-called "Fall," when the hierarchies descended into human forms, with the subsequent involvement in matter, the sense of personality and separateness arose. The light of divine vision became obscured. From hierarchies of Gods, we became races of men. Humanity, *The Secret Doctrine* teaches, is now at that critical point on the return cycle where spirit must reassert itself and supersede matter. The present cycle is thus one of change, of transition from men to gods, when *personal* thought, feeling, and act must give way to hierarchical, or *impersonal,* feeling, thought, and act—at least among the *avant garde* of the race.

What is the meaning of *personality* in its effect upon the life and thought of the average man? And what the meaning and nature of *impersonality?* Is it possible to make the transition from men to gods through the duties and routines of daily life?

The term "person" derives from the Latin *persona,* meaning *mask.* To think and act as *persons,* therefore, means to assume the position of the body or mask, which hides the Soul within. It is to think of one's self and of others as separate units—related, perhaps, but separate and distinct. This is the position implied by both materialistic science and dogmatic religion, an attitude that has given rise to the vast retinue of evils that afflict modern society. For personality breeds selfishness, which is the root of all evil.

Impersonality, on the other hand, is a state of consciousness assimilated to the Soul. Thought from this basis has for its aim the welfare of one's larger Self, of the hierarchy, or Over-Soul, to which

the unit belongs, and it is always altruistic. Some, however, preach a doctrine of impersonality which takes everything human out of life and makes of it a cold negation.

To live the life of impersonality without becoming insensitive and unfeeling, therefore, requires a skill equal to that of balancing on a razor's edge. For most people, impersonality implies lack of compassion, disregard for the trials and needs of others. In the life of the Soul, compassion and impersonality are indispensable complements of each other, since there can be neither true impersonality without compassion, nor true compassion without impersonality. According to Theosophy, there are two dynamic forces in nature: the centripetal and the centrifugal. The *centrifugal* (away from the center) is the tendency toward differentiation; it is the sustaining power of personality and selfishness. The *centripetal,* on the other hand, has its legitimate field of operation in the swing of the manifested universe back toward the center from which it evolved. The centripetal is the basis of Impersonality manifesting in the heart, as the ardent aspiration of the personality to unite with its Parent Source. How can one find happiness and contentment who makes personality his center, who deliberately shuts out friends in the belief that he can live alone? What but disaster can result from these premises? Yet, the centripetal, of itself, is neither good nor bad. Its quality is found in direction and aim, and in its universality. For instance, compassion for one's family only, or for one's country, is but a personal concern and therefore a form of selfishness. To seek to invoke the great power of compassion toward any other center than the One Universal Self, or toward its ray in the heart of everyone, is to court failure, inevitably.

Many people believe they are compassionate, but few express compassion impersonally, that is, universally. Impersonal compassion is never emotional or sentimental, nor is it manifested by protestation or argument, but rather in steadfastness and quiet strength. Rooted in a realization of the community of all life, it is a sincere desire to serve all men everywhere, in sympathy with their needs and efforts. Its light brings encouragement to continue the struggle, undaunted. Lacking impersonality, compassion can never be calm; instead, it degenerates into an indulgence in "aromatic pain." Only impersonal compassion enables one to help effectively. Without it, a person becomes involved in the objects of his affection, with concomitant anxieties.

Personal attitudes find full flower in the matter of giving and receiving advice. The ability to think and act properly at either end of this exchange has always been a primary requisite for those who would enter the path of spiritual evolution. When someone offers us advice, for example, upon what does our acceptance or rejection depend—upon the value of the advice given, or upon our like or dislike of the person giving it? If suggestions offered, even by an enemy, cannot be weighed without rankle or opposition, one may be assured that he is acting from the worst side of his nature. Unless regarded impersonally, sage advice may be rejected and a golden opportunity lost.

The same principle applies to the *giving* of advice, which must also be done impersonally. The recipient must be left completely free to accept it or not, with no feeling whatever of expectation or possible resentment on the giver's part. Those quick to give advice are often offended when the recipient refuses to fashion his life according to the pattern suggested. Such people rarely pause to ask why another should follow their advice if he does not choose to do so. Even when rejection leads to suffering, such a course is clearly within the individual's right of choice. Is it not better that a man act as seems best to *him,* even though he makes mistakes, than that he becomes clay in the hands of others? Why is it that small children are innately defiant and self-determined, if not that they are thus exhibiting this defensive fortification of the soul, and that they need to act from within themselves?

Buddhist monks, unlike the priests of Western religions, do not interfere in anyone's personal life. When someone comes to them for advice, they refer to the eternal Law. Is not such an impersonal presentation of the principles of action, which leaves the decision to the questioner, the only legitimate function of the giver of advice? For when personal feelings and expectations exist, and when the adviser is anxious that his wisdom be accepted and acted on in a certain way, his declaration of principles will be colored. H. P. Blavatsky once expressed the desire to be "a window" through which pure light may shine.

The history of the Theosophical Movement illustrates the battle of personality versus impersonality, the struggle of the Reincarnating Ego to make the transition from man to god. Personality, therefore, has been called the rock upon which the original Society foundered. Personal interests and attachments, personal loyalties

and devotions, were the prisms which distorted the pure white light of truth. What else, then, but a sense of hierarchical individuality can restore the Movement to its original program of work? How else than through the window of impersonality can the light of spiritual Unity shine through? It is only as men begin to live as gods instead of as persons that they can ever hope to resolve the problems that beset the nations of this cycle.

For all practical purposes, living as gods means the developing of the child heart and learning to love things beautiful; it means becoming more honest and plain and simple, not impatient of the faults of others. It means sensing the sweet side of life and getting to like one's friends better. It means standing up for right for right's sake, not for any preference the position may bring. Without bothering too much about whether one is impersonal or not, to live as gods means thinking of one's self as the hierarchy of which one is a part, and expanding the sense of identity to include every other member of the human race.

Freedom from Illusion

To give up [hidden] claims is to become disillusioned, in the best sense of the word. It requires a considerable amount of energy to harbor an illusion. When we abandon our claims to omnipotence we stop nourishing the illusion that the world is as we would like it to be. . . . To lose our illusions and accept the rules of the game of life is a prerequisite to human freedom and responsibility. As long as we harbor claims and illusions of omnipotence, we judge both our successes and failures, our responsibilities and limitations, by fantastic standards which we inevitably fall short of. But once we accept the limitations that constitute the human condition we become free to explore the possible. To accept the rules of the game is not equivalent to mere resignation. Rather, it is to live in an attitude of wonder. Once we are able to confess that we are not the center of the world, we perceive things in an altogether new way. We are set free to admire rather than possess, to enjoy rather than exploit, to accept rather than grasp.

—Sam Keen

ASTROLOGY

[During the periods of her editorship of the *Theosophist* in India and *Lucifer* in England, H. P. Blavatsky wrote numerous articles and editorials anonymously, besides replying to a great many questions and complaints from friendly and unfriendly readers in all parts of the world. The same is true of William Q. Judge, who was editor of the *Path* magazine in New York City. It is not always easy, therefore, to determine the authorship of worthwhile material that appeared in these three publications. But since something is known of the style and language of both writers, and since some of the material seems to bear the impress of deep occult knowledge, it is reasonably safe to ascribe certain writings to the one or the other—especially since both were editors of the journals in question, and took full responsibility for their contents.

The following article on Astrology, which originally appeared in the June, 1884, issue of the *Theosophist* as a commentary on another writer's review of "an elementary work on Astrology," is one such piece of writing. It is here printed for the first time in THEOSOPHY for its inherent value.—Editors, THEOSOPHY]

THE popular idea seems to be that the planets and the stars exercise a certain influence upon the destiny of man, which the science of Astrology can determine; and that there are means within the reach of that science which can be used to propitiate "the evil stars." This crude notion, not philosophically understood, leads to two unscientific fallacies. On the one hand it gives rise to a belief in the doctrine of fatality, which says that man has no free-will inasmuch as everything is predetermined, and on the other it leads one to suppose that the laws of Nature are not immutable, since certain propitiatory rites may change the ordinary course of events. These two extreme views induce the "rationalist" to reject "Astrology" as a remnant of the uncivilized condition of our ancestors, since as a matter-of-fact student he refuses to recognize the importance of the saying, "Real philosophy seeks rather to solve than to deny." It is an axiom of the philosophic student that truth generally lies between the extremes. If one therefore proceeds in this spirit, he will find that there is yet not an unreasonable or un-

scientific hypothesis which can reconcile all these different views, and which, not unlikely, was what the ancients meant by Astrology.

Although a study of this science may enable one to determine what the course of events will be, it cannot necessarily be inferred therefrom that the planets exercise any influence over that course. The clock indicates, it does not influence, the time. And a distant traveller has often to put right his clock so that it may indicate correctly the time of the place he visits. Thus, though the planets may have no hand in changing the destiny of the man, still their position may indicate what that destiny is likely to be. This hypothesis leads us to the question, "What is destiny?" As understood by the Occultist, it is merely the chain of causation producing its correspondential series of effects. One who has carefully followed the teachings of Occultism, as recently given out, concerning *Devachan* and future re-births, knows that every individual is his own creator or his own father, *i.e.*, our future personality will be the result of our present mode of living. In the same manner our present birth, with all its conditions, is the tree grown out of the germ sown in our past incarnations. Our physical and spiritual conditions are the effects of our actions produced on those two planes in previous existences. Now it is a well-known principle of Occultism that the ONE LIFE which pervades ALL connects all the bodies in space. All heavenly bodies have this mutual relation, which is blended with man's existence, since he is but a microcosm in the macrocosm. Every thought, as much as action, is dynamic and is impressed in the imperishable Book of Nature—the *Akasa,* the objective aspect of the UNMANIFESTED LIFE. All our thoughts and actions thus produce the vibrations in space, which mould our future career. And astrology is a science which, having determined the nature of the laws that govern these vibrations, is able to state precisely a particular or a series of results, the causes of which have already been produced by the individual in his previous life.

Since the present incarnation is the child of the previous one, and since there is but that ONE SELF which holds together all the planets of the Solar system, the position of those planets at the time of the birth of an individual—which event is the aggregate result of the causes already produced—gives to the true Astrologer the data upon which to base his predictions. It should be well remembered at the same time that just as the "astronomer who catalogues the stars cannot add one atom to the universe," so also can no astrol-

oger, no more than the planet, *influence* the human destiny. Perhaps the following beautiful passage from that exquisite work of Bulwer Lytton's, *Zanoni,* may help to make the meaning clearer:

> For the accomplishment of whatever is great and lofty, the clear perception of truths is the first requisite—truths adapted to the object desired. The warrior thus reduces the chances of battle to combinations almost of mathematics. He can predict a result, if he can but depend upon the materials he is forced to employ.

This necessitates a consideration of the element of clairvoyance necessary to constitute a true astrologer.

The ancient *Rishis,* to condemn whose books without a hearing was still recently a general practice, had by observation, experiment and deep occult knowledge, taken account of all conceivable combinations of various causes and determined with mathematical precision, almost to an infinitesimal point their efforts. But yet, since the cosmos is infinite, no finite being can ever take cognisance of *all* the possibilities of Nature; at any rate they cannot be committed to writing, since as *Isis Unveiled* says: "to express divine ideas, divine language is necessary." Recognizing the truth of this most important but unfortunately often neglected axiom, they laid down as the first condition to success in astrology a pure life, physically, morally and spiritually. This was intended to develop the psychic capacities of the astrologer who could thus see in *Akasa* the combinations, not alluded to in the written works, and predict their results in the manner beautifully illustrated in the above extract from *Zanoni.*

In short, true Astrology is a mathematical science, which teaches us what particular causes will produce what particular combinations, and thus, understood in its real significance, gives us the means of obtaining the knowledge how to guide our future births. True, [of] such astrologers there are but few: but are we justified in condemning the science of electricity because there may be very few real electricians? We must not at the same time lose sight of the fact that although there are numberless combinations which must be determined by the psychic vision of the astrologer, there are yet a very large number of them which have been determined and put on record by the ancient sages. It is these cases which baffle us when we find that some astrological calculations prove correct while others are quite beside the mark.

on the lookout

The Christian Scene

Today's intellectual temper, which demands ever-increasing freedom of personal decision and assumption of individual responsibility, is reacting against entrenched authority in both Protestant and Catholic churches. Judging from what one sees in the press, the tide of institutional religion is fast running out: ministers, priests, nuns, and the intellectual laity are no longer willing to submit to the moral dictates of the church; criticism is widespread and vocal.

Not long ago a Unitarian minister, Dr. Stephen Fritchman, said in a sermon that "organized Christianity is far nearer its demise than most people will admit." (Los Angeles *Times,* Dec. 19, 1966.) In evidence he cited the Protestant "God is Dead" movement, the defection of priests and nuns from the Roman church, and public criticism of "vast church establishments and property holdings." Dr. Fritchman expressed outrage that human reason is not freely allowed to operate in exposing the absurdity of the church's claims to divine authority, or to its claim as the "one true faith."

A New Ethic Needed

Dr. Fritchman continued his indictment:

> [Organized religion] will go because its inner strength of commanding the faithful to total obedience has died or is well along the road toward death. The church's vast cathedrals, its billions in wealth, its army of ministers, cannot save it.
>
> We need a new battery of Voltaires to end the surviving support of the Christian myth which so cruelly hampers development of a new humanity. The sophistries of organized religion must be ended, not only because it is an intellectual outrage to a thinking man, but because it impedes our being decent human beings to one another. A new social ethic is being evolved around the world which most Christians are unable to accept. It says that the needs of all people for peace and health must be met, that the ancient division between the rich and the poor, so piously sanctioned by almost all religions, is bankrupt. The new ethic is based in part on the Judean-Christian ethic but this is no longer the point.

Rejection of Total Authority

In the Roman Church, the defections of priests and nuns no longer takes place under the veil of anonymity and secrecy. They are speaking out, giving reasons. Often involved are priests and nuns of recognized ability. A recent dramatic withdrawal was that of the Rev. Charles Davis (*Time,* Dec. 30, 1966), editor of *Clergy Review* and professor of theology at a college in Oxfordshire, England. He left the church after having been a priest for twenty years, explaining:

> I do not think that the claim the church makes as an institution rests upon any adequate Biblical and historical basis. I don't believe that the church is absolute, and I don't believe any more in papal infallibility. There is concern for authority at the expense of truth, as I am constantly shown by instances of the damage to persons by the workings of an impersonal and unfree system.

The Church and Higher Education

A less dramatic, though equally impressive, case is that of Jacqueline Greenan, president of Webster College, Missouri (*Time,* Jan. 20). Miss Greenan asked, and received, permission from her archbishop to resign from her order after having served eighteen years as a nun. She will, however, remain as president of Webster, which, if Rome permits, will become a secular college with a lay board of trustees. "It is my personal conviction," said Miss Greenan, "that the very nature of higher education is opposed to juridical control by the church."

"Some church officials estimate that resignations from the nation's sisterhoods have more than doubled in the past five years," says *Time* (Jan. 13).

Broad View at the University Level

In a lecture at Fordham University, the largest Jesuit school in the United States, the Rev. Norris Clarke said that "the period of one philosophy in the Catholic church is finished." He said, according to the Ottawa *Citizen* (Dec. 7, 1966), that "religion must be multiple, able to take in all philosophies." There is this further quotation from him:

> Christianity, until it dialogues with Hinduism and Buddhism, does not know what its own full message is. Each faith has different blindspots, different visions. For instance, we in the West

> don't know what the self is. The Eastern religions have articulated this far better.

Thus, we see that criticisms of organized religions made by H. P. Blavatsky are now being repeated by members of the clergy themselves, and freely publicized in newspapers and magazines. It is a confirmation which lends support to a sweeping prophecy made in *Isis Unveiled* (I, 613):

> A few centuries more, and there will linger no sectarian beliefs in either of the great religions of Humanity. Brahmanism and Buddhism, Christianity and Mahometanism will all disappear before the mighty rush of *facts*. But this can only come to pass when the world returns to the grand religion of the past; the *knowledge* of those majestic systems which preceded, by far, Brahmanism, and even the primitive monotheism of the ancient Chaldeans.
>
> *The religion of the ancients is the religion of the future.*

Subjective Aspects of Play

J. M. Burgers, a physicist at the University of Maryland, in commenting in *Science* for Dec. 30, 1966, on a previous article ("Curiosity and Exploration," by D. E. Berlyne), suggests that "questions connected with why animals play and explore will take on an interesting perspective if we begin with the assumption that play is a basic feature of life and a main factor in its evolution." Play, he says, involves not only a recognition of alternatives but also the ability to choose between different alternatives in an attempt to keep the game going. This ability suggests to Dr. Burgers the presence of a subjective "conceptual faculty" as a connecting link between physical molecular processes and mental activity. "Such a hypothesis," he believes,

> will enable us to construct a link with mental activities if we assume that the decisive faculty is the carrier of subjective aspects such as we find in the activities of the mind. In view of the continuity of all forms of life, we assume that forms of these activities are also present in other living beings. Within ourselves, we notice that not all these processes penetrate the "master mind"; evidently processes go on at various levels, and it is appropriate to suppose that some forms are active in every living cell, perhaps even in parts of cells.

Approaching Occult Physiology?

If we consider each cell as a congeries of atoms, it becomes clear that Dr. Burgers' hypothesis has occult validity; for, according to

H.P.B. (*S.D.* II, 672) there is memory, will, and sensation in every atom. Or again, (I, 632) "the atoms, or material molecules . . . are informed in their turn by their *apperceptive* monads, just as every cell in a human body is so informed." Against this background, Dr. Burger's concluding remarks suggest that he may be approaching, however vaguely, what H.P.B. called "the terra incognita of the Biologist—the inner soul of the physical cell." He says:

> What I have been proposing is an alternative to the point of view that physical theory can explain all aspects of life. My thesis is that subjective features accompanying reactions in living systems are effective; they are neither a deterministic result of the physical situation nor random phenomena. They are to a certain extent autonomous, but they may be influenced by traditions or rules, and we may be able to find out something about these rules. . . . Our social structure is built on and operates on the presumption that man can decide between alternative courses, and that he is responsible for his choice. This is an experimental fact, and there is nothing supernatural in it. Between physics and human life lies the domain of biology. Perhaps what we observe in ourselves may give hints that will be helpful in explaining biological phenomena.

Biologist's Hypothesis; Occult Sine Qua Non

Many biologists, says Dr. Burgers, admit that it is necessary to postulate that a relation to the future is an essential feature of life. This means that a psychic factor must be assumed present in even the simplest forms of life. It is interesting to note that this emphasis by a physicist concurs with that of Albert P. Mathews, a biochemist, who wrote in *General Cytology* (1924):

> Even when we have a reasonably clear picture of physical things, we cannot make a complete explanation of the chemistry of the cell until we know another and equally important factor which is at present wholly neglected by the chemist and physicist, namely, the psychic element which is the most characteristic, indeed, one might say, the characteristic thing in living organisms. . . . For who can doubt that those properties of the atoms which show themselves in the psychical phenomena of living things are also present in the same atoms in the inorganic form? We cannot understand chemistry, therefore, and certainly not biochemistry, the chemistry of cells, until the relation between material and psychic things is worked out.

There are signs on the horizon, then, which suggest that psychology and neurology may eventually become sufficiently devel-

oped to bring into sharp relief the need to explore the "hypothesis" that a psychic factor is inherent in the atom itself, and is manifested at every level in a manner appropriate to that organism.

Important Dimension Often Disregarded

The "flash news" approach to the mysteries of anthropology, reporting finds which are held to be "startling" or "revolutionary" in respect to the antiquity of man, may give the reader of the commercial press a feeling that science, as usual, is progressing at a great rate. But what these brief and often sensational accounts omit is the context of slowly changing anthropological opinion concerning the basic assumptions of Darwinism. Back in 1952 (February), Lookout noted that with each passing year the emphasis of scientific opinion is more on the *differences* between the lines of evolution of man and ape. We repeat here a quotation then given from Frederic Wood Jones' *Hallmarks of Mankind*—one particularly apropos in relation to the popular news accounts which appear from day to day:

> Considered solely from the point of view of structure, Man is an extremely primitive type, and . . . though more primitive in basal structure than the living monkeys and apes, Man has his own remarkable structural specialisations that distinguish him from all other mammals and appear to be very ancient hallmarks. . . .
>
> It would be better to discard all the drawings that depict the early progenitors of Man as slouching brutes carrying themselves in postures incompatible with the dictates of gravity, and to relegate to oblivion all the speculations and theories concerning the gradual rise of Man from a quadrupedal pronograde to a bipedal orthograde posture. (THEOSOPHY 40: 185.)

Separate Lines of Descent?

Again in April, 1952, Lookout took note of a *Life* article featuring the discovery by Carleton Coon (anthropologist) and Louis Dupree (geologist) of the bones of "modern-looking humans" found in a layer of earth that "could have been deposited not later than 75,000 to 100,000 years ago." The excavation also contained animal bones and tools which showed that "modern man, true Homo sapiens . . . shared the earth with primitive creatures once thought to be far below them on the evolutionary tree."

Other dissenting views include those of Franz Weidenreich, a German anthropologist who proposed that the origin of man had oc-

curred "simultaneously all over the globe." (THEOSOPHY 26: 574.) Meanwhile, Dr. W. Grey Walters, a neurologist, wrote in *The Living Brain*:

> The mechanisms of the brain reveal a deep physiological division between man and ape, deeper than the superficial physical differences of most distant origin. If the title of soul be given to the higher functions in question, it must be admitted that the other animals have only a glimmer of the light that so shines before men. (THEOSOPHY 44:423 *et seq.*)

Viewpoint Changing

It is clear, of course, that when these anthropologists speak of "man" they are considering only his physical remains. More recently, another kind of evidence has been receiving attention. Following is an extract from an article by Lewis Mumford (in the Winter *American Scholar*) in which the high psychological capacities of ancient man are held to be more important than his "tool-making" propensities:

> By now, I trust, it should be plain that the chronic practice of describing man as a tool-using animal conceals some of the very facts that must be exposed and revaluated. Why, for example, if tools were so important to human development, did it take man at least half a million years—or three times that period, if we place the dubious hominids of South America in the direct line of descent—to shape anything but the crudest stone tools? Why is it that the lowest existing peoples, who support a hand-to-mouth existence with a few tools and weapons, nevertheless have elaborate ceremonials, a complicated kinship organization, and a finely differentiated language, capable of expressing every aspect of their experience?
>
> Why, further, were high cultures like those of the Maya, the Aztecs, the Peruvians, still using only the simplest handicraft equipment a few centuries ago, although their monuments were magnificent and ancient roads like that to Machu Picchu were marvels of engineering? How is it that the Maya, who had no machines, were masters of abstruse mathematics and had evolved an extremely intricate method of time reckoning which showed superb powers of abstract thought? Once one dares to ask these questions the whole course of human history, from the earliest times on, appears in a new light, and our present machine-centered technology no longer seems the sole witness to the far-off divine event toward which all creation has moved.

Man's Heritage

Theosophists will naturally keep in mind that when H. P. Bla-

vatsky speaks of Man, she means the Self-conscious Monad *and* its instruments, and in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 669) she shows that the theosophical teachings are primarily concerned with man's spiritual heritage:

> We have one thing in common with the Darwinian school: it is the law of gradual, extremely slow evolution, embracing many million years. The chief quarrel, it appears, is with regard to the nature of the primitive "Ancestor." We shall be told that the Dhyan Chohan, or the "progenitor" of Manu, is a hypothetical being unknown on the *physical plane*. We reply that it was believed in by the whole of antiquity, and by nine-tenths of the present humanity; whereas not only is the *pithecoid man*, or "ape-man," a purely hypothetical creature of Hæckel's creation, unknown and untraceable on this earth, but . . . it is simply absurd, even as a fiction.

Leonid Shower

What has been called "perhaps the richest shower" of meteors "of this century at its peak" occurred in the early morning hours of Nov. 17 of last year. Somewhere between 20-25,000 Leonids were observed by frantic astronomers between a little after 2:00 a.m. and the dawn which came at 7:10. After 4:00 a.m. the fall was so rapid that observers were unable to keep up with the "storm," and had to fall back on estimating the number per second, which reached the phenomenal rate of 40. A historical note on this extraordinary celestial sight appears in the *Review of Popular Astronomy* for January/February, as follows:

> Nearly two decades ago, a swarm of cometary debris swung around in its orbit, beyond the orbit of the planet Uranus, and began its fateful return to the region of the Sun. This event was heralded by a few wispy conjectures, for no living person could recall the past glory of the Leonid meteors. First observed by the peripatetic Humboldt in 1799, the Leonids burst into immortality in 1833 as they covered the skies of a terrorized North American continent. In subsequent returns, during 1866, 1899 and 1933, the Leonids performed at less spectacular rates, a shadow of their former greatness.

The only "wispy conjecture" possible here is that the Leonids picked an excellent date for their most recent dramatic performance.

Vital Magnetic Field

That human beings are in some measure dependent for their well-being on a positive electrical field is apparently a well estab-

lished scientific fact. Dr. Cristjo Cristofy, a Bulgarian scientist now living in Evanston, Ill., has perfected a device the size of a human fist which restores the natural positive field, if it has been interfered with by various artificial structures. According to an account in *Product Engineering* for Feb. 13, 1967:

> For reasons still unknown, the human body reacts to the absence of a positive field. A person becomes fatigued, drowsy, and bored. His mental efficiency suffers, causing an increase in errors in typing, computation, assembly work requiring dexterity, and reading instruments. The effect of electric fields on mental processes has been known to science for more than 200 years. . . . tests showed that a negative electric field markedly reduces vitality and fertility of animals, whereas a positive field stimulates respiration, digestion, and metabolism in general.

Normal and Subnormal Fields

The normal, out-of-doors positive electrical field varies from 500 to 800 volts per meter, according to weather, temperature, altitude, and local radioactivity. In Denver, for example, normal readings are 1500 v/m. Urban dwellers and office workers will not be heartened by the information that—

> The steel framework of a building, the steel reinforcement in concrete, the steel structure of a vehicle all substantially reduce this outdoor field, even with many windows. . . .
>
> Certain plastic enclosures such as auto bodies and truck cabs even induce strong negative fields. Furniture, rugs, seat covers, and wall hangings of plastic accelerate mental fatigue in occupants of a room or vehicle. . . .
>
> How the negative fields, or the absence of a positive field, affect the body is not yet known, according to Dr. Cristofy. Low-level currents are deductible in the body, but scientists cannot say how these currents affect mental processes. All that is known is that a positive field of, say 2000 v/m, introduced in a shielded enclosure, produces a marked increase in mental performance.

The Bulgarian scientist's invention was preceded by a measuring device with which he was able to measure accurately the polarity and intensity of fields in enclosed areas. What seems evident, from what is said in this report, is a close relation between the field in which human beings work and the pranic currents which are the source of normal vitality. Dr. Cristofy's device, one might think, brings a practical verification of the general principle that life and electricity are expressions of the same basic reality—as taught by Paracelsus hundreds of years ago (see *Isis Unveiled* I, 169).